

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND COLLABORAL INTELLIGENCE.

M. Agassiz's Lectures at Boston.—The Lowell Institution of that city is one of the few where foreign *savants* are permitted to lecture. Such was the case with Professor Lyell, and lately the above Swiss geologist. The attendance at the latter was extraordinary; 7,000 persons applied for tickets, of which only 4,500 could be accommodated, although the lecturer repeated every delivery twice. They have been also the inducement for the establishment of a new museum of geology, as the lectures made the poor state of the present locale too conspicuous. The estimates and plan were soon made, 30,000 dollars subscribed within a fortnight, and in a few months the new Boston Museum will be ready. "This," says an American periodical, "is our way to do things."

Neapolitan Improvements.—On the late tour through the provinces, his majesty was accompanied by the director general of roads and bridges, and the king often ordered improvements and new works, when pelted by rain and wind.—A new Roman house has been excavated at Pompeii, under the direction of Cav. Bonucci, and the vestibulum and impluvium are already brought to light. Amongst the statues found, a female playing with two goats is especially fine. It is in perfect preservation, and has been placed in the Museo Borbonico.

Art in Frankfurt.—Although there be some artists at that great commercial and banking city—art cannot be said to flourish appropriately. The museum, which once served as a centre for art and literary tendencies, wants remodelling—if not dissolution. Formerly art-works were exhibited here, and served for an *infringement* of mind. This tendency has been lost sight of—and *displacement* substituted.

VIENNA ART-EXHIBITION.

May, 1847.

Historical paintings have been more numerous this year than the preceding, owing, probably to a sort of exhortation on the part of the Art Union to that effect. "Thence, it is a good sign, that our artists have turned their attention towards history, nay, Austrian history. It is, however, out to be gained, that historical art is still deficient in higher attributes, and that it is more the anecdotal and accidental, than the truly grand, which is mostly represented. A chief cause of this anomaly is, that few historical painters are imbued with that, whence they derive their name—we mean *history*. He, only, who thoroughly understands the mind and essence of a period, can seize and render its events worthily. And it is a strange logic, to form merely the hand, which produces something, while that, by which this is produced—the *head*—remains untutored and uncultured." After these general remarks, we may first point to Rahl's "Maafred," elevated on the shields of the Saracens at Luceria—an art-work full of ingenious capacities and noble mind. A young artist, of the name of Zichy, has also produced some commendable work.

Sculpture is every where influenced by the possibility of producing extensive works; and this has been hitherto much wanting in Vienna. Now it is said, that government intends to erect several monumental fountains (*Brunnen*), in which native artists are to be employed. Mr. Plethner has made formerly some attempt at modelling the heroes of the Nibelungen song. Ramekmayer has made a model of St. Cecilia, destined for a joint monument of Glock, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. The art of chasing and die-sinking appears yet in its infancy, as, besides Mr. O. Steinbock's medal, no other work appears in this exhibition. In the department of landscapes, the Vienna school may be said to be piercing from the mere *vista* to the real art-work, and Professor Steinfel's "Dawn of Day" is a surprising performance. Mr. Valentini's works are also stamped by a high degree of seriousness (*Ernst*) and repose.

It is to be regretted that, amongst the oil paintings, no great work of architecture is to be met with, while, amongst the water-colour drawings, those of Heinrich (Roman ruins) and Alt are meritorious. A number of architectural projects and plans, however, adorn the

exhibition, mostly by Professor Rüster and his pupils. As far as the reproduction of artworks by prints is concerned, some blame may be thrown on our publishers, as even an engraver like Mr. Tassier has to occupy his time in vignette engraving. The coloured lithographs, however, issued from the Imperial Typographical Establishment, are deserving of notice.

Casting an ultimate glance at this exhibition of about 500 numbers, we cannot say (as some do) that art has retrograded in Vienna; still its advance is here, as in most places, *highly imperceptible*. The appearance of novel powers and high talent is a thing over which a higher agency alone disposes: according to Goethe's saying, "*es ist das für georgt, dass Bäume nicht in Himmel wachsen*."

A VISIT TO STOWE.

Mr. Editor.—The increasing value of your labours, lays us all under an obligation to assist you whenever we have it in our power, for in the case of a publication issued at such brief intervals as yours is, it is only by the combined aid of numbers that it can reach its full efficiency.

I send the following which you may perhaps find room for, for the benefit of your younger readers in the south.

At a season of the year when a short absence from the office is usually allowed the architectural student, with a view to a summer ramble, he may be glad to know of one which combines the *dulce et utile* to an inconsiderable extent, and which I took, myself, with a pupil, last week—it was to Stowe, the seat of the Duke of Buckingham.

Leaving Euston-square Station at 3 p.m., we reached Wolverton at 5 p.m., and walking thence round by Buckingham, we arrived at a comfortable inn close upon the park entrance of Stowe at 10 p.m., a distance of twelve miles. Beginning early the next day, we spent the whole in viewing the beauties of the place, and at 4 p.m., started again on foot for Wolverton, returning thence by a ½ p. 8 train to London, reaching home by ½ p. 10, having left it just thirty hours:—our united expenses of every kind reached 2*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*

Well knowing the character of the architecture of Stowe, I had not raised my expectations at all high, and I was not therefore disappointed, for there was certainly no one object, among the numbers that adorn the place, that, purely as a work of architecture, gave me entire satisfaction, but as lessons for the combination of architecture with foliage, and for the play of light and shade on the several structures in their multiplied varieties, I have seen no where else in England any thing that approaches it. The variety for study of effect in the temples, pavilions, columnar monuments, groups of sculpture, and other features, is most interesting, and for the architect and architectural draftsman, most improving,—a practised hand with proper materials, would bring away in a week a portfolio of reminiscences which he might have, alas, to pay much dearer for in fetching from the continent, but which when obtained might perhaps be in reality more to his purpose.

The grandeur of the park and the beauty of the timber; the truly palatial character of the mansion and its appendages; the princely magnificence with which the grounds are kept up; the high principles of liberty and morals, which in many cases the very stones are inscribed to inculcate, and above all, the generous liberality with which the whole is open to the public, render the place pre-eminently inviting to the artist, whether for profit or for enjoyment. And if, as Sir Joshua Reynolds observes, the student's seasons of recreation are to have a bearing on his profession, a visit to Stowe offers, indeed, a rich opportunity for such a purpose.—I am, Mr. Editor, yours very faithfully,

NONNELLUS.

London, June 27, 1847.

SHORT TIME ON SATURDAYS.—A memorial has been forwarded simultaneously to many of the builders of the metropolis from the joiners in their employ, asking to leave off work at three o'clock on Saturdays, and receive full day's pay. It is to be hoped that the matter may be arranged in a friendly spirit.

* It is provided for, that trees will not grow up to heaven.

† The house can be seen internally by the public on Tuesdays and Fridays only: but this my visit did not accomplish.

HEALTH IN THE CITY.

In consequence of statements recently made to the Lord Mayor, respecting the state of the cesspools, and the accumulation of filth in the cellars of many houses, the Commissioners of Sewers have commenced proceedings against some of the landlords, under the cholera Act, 9th Vict., chap. 96, which empowers them, upon receiving the certificate of two medical gentlemen, that there is in any house or other place an accumulation of noxious matter of any kind, or any foul privy or cesspool, to make complaint to the magistrate, and cause the owner of the house to be summoned, and an order made that he should abate the nuisance within forty-eight hours. In default of his obeying this direction, the order required the commissioners to enter the premises and abate the nuisance at the charge of the landlord.

Various parties were summoned to Guildhall a few days ago, and in one case where the landlord refused to attend, Mr. Alderman Musgrove made an order for the cleansing of cesspools complained of, within twenty-four hours. The Alderman said on that occasion, that "as the chairman of the Commission of Sewers for the Tower Hamlets and a commissioner of the Holborn and Finsbury division, he had a practical knowledge of the subject, and he would affirm that if the legislature would entrust the Commissioners of Sewers with the authority to compel the owners of houses to make underground drains to the great sewers constructed by the commissioners, the grievance might be entirely removed without the interference of Government or any of the Government commissioners. He could vouch that, particularly within the last three years, the most anxious attention, and vast sums of money had been devoted to making proper sewers in the thoroughfares, but they could not persuade or compel the owners of houses to open a communication with those sewers at their own expense, and particularly the owners of houses in courts. The public local burdens were quite heavy enough, without adding charges that clearly belonged to private individuals."

We cannot avoid referring here to the recent death of the strenuous and able advocate of sanitary regulations, Dr. Lynch, by whom the above proceedings were chiefly originated. He died at the early age of thirty-eight.

WATER ENTRANCE TO THE DOGE'S PALACE, VENICE.

The water entrance to the Ducal Palace is in the back of the building, opposite to the prisons, a narrow canal running between the two structures.

The architecture of this front of the palace is plainer than the other more public portions; the most decorated part of it is the entrance-gate, which are in the style known by the term *cinque cento*, of which beautiful style Venice contains so many elaborate examples.

The shield of the dogs who erected the building, the insignia of St. Mark, and ornaments, such as dolphins, sirens, allusions all illustrative of the power, the prosperity, and maritime history of the republic, adorn the front of the building.

The architectural composition of the entrance-gate, notwithstanding the difference in width of the pilasters, and the great width of the opening, is extremely elegant; the decoration, although pervading every part, is not too rich, nor does any superfluity appear.

The sculptured representation of leaves, fruit, and flowers in the architrave, and the festoons and centre enrichment above, are all worked with considerable delicacy and great skill.

The doors are of cedar; the lower part of them is rather injured by the prows of the gondolas and the salt water dashing against them; with this exception, the whole of the composition is in good preservation. As the canal in front of the building is not much frequented, the doorway is little known, and is seldom seen by visitors.

The representation here given, like that of the fire-place in the palace of the dukes of Burgundy, given in No. 226, was made from materials preserved in the library of the School of Design, Somerset House.

C. J. R.